



April 1, 2011

Dear House Taxation committee members:

The Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) is a gubernatorially appointed committee of tourism related representatives whose focus is to help maintain a healthy industry in the state of Montana. The TAC represents Montana's tourism interests and asks that you please vote in opposition to Senate Bill 253 –Eliminate certain individual and corporation tax credits, sponsored by Senator Bob Lake, as this would eliminate the Big Sky on the Big Screen film incentive, 15-31-901, MCA through 15-31-911, MCA.

Tourism, including film production, is one of the state's basic industries. As such, we bring new money into the state. The Big Sky on the Big Screen Act film tax credit was designed to attract larger budget projects such as feature films, national TV advertisements and TV programming. This production activity takes place statewide and brings economic development to all corners of the state. The money brought by film production is new money to the state's economy. Without the film incentive, this money would be spent in other states or countries. If you consider the larger economic picture, the total economic impact created by this new money circulating in the economy since the passage of the Act is \$55 million dollars.

Additionally the Big Sky on the Big Screen Act's film tax incentive functions as a significant marketing tool for the state to the film industry. Almost always, the first question a film producer will ask is what is your state's incentive? The Big Sky on the Big Screen Act is a modest incentive program, and it brings Montana to the table for consideration.

In addition to the immediate reduction of filming in Montana, passage of this bill would result in a loss of jobs for Montana's film industry workers and graduates of the film programs from both Montana State University and the University of Montana. The long-term effects of the elimination of the Big Sky on the Big Screen Act would be a gradual reduction of the whole of the production industry and the new dollars it brings to the economy as Montana's crew and production infrastructure relocated or closed due to the reduction in production.

Please do not pass Senate Bill 253. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions at 406-226-9220 Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Ed DesRosier, Chairman  
Tourism Advisory Council

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Brian Schweitzer, Governor